Bella Coola Indian - Carbon Chapter 1 (early version)

BR-0054/001 (414)

CHAPTER I.

LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENT.

"Bella Coola" is the term commonly applied by white men to designate those Indians who, until a few years ago, inhabited the valley of the Bella Coola River in central British Columbia for a distance of about forty miles from the sea. As Boas has recorded, (1) Bella Coola is a faulty pronounciation of the Kwakiutl term, B lxula, by which these Indians are known to the mebers of that tribe. There is no term in the Bella Coola language that includes the various groups described in this monograph. Linguistically, the Bella Coola are an isolated island of Salish-peaking people, separated from other tribes of the same linguistic stock by Athapascan-and Kwakiutl-speaking peoples. (2). Culturally, they belong to the central section of the North Pacific coast culture area. (3)

The sources of the Bella Coola River are among the mountains of the wind-swept uplands of Central British Columbia. After Winding through these, the two main branches fall rapidly, at a distance of about forty miles from the sea, into two deep valleys which unite some thirty-five miles from the sea to form the main valley of the Bella Coola. Down this the river rushes, tempestuously, in serpentine curves to the sea. Nowhere deep and sluggish enough for the use of boats, even if such had been known to the Indians, it served to bear their dug-out river canoes, hewn from some mighty cedar. The valley is never wider than two or three miles, in many places less, is hemmed by lofty mountains that rise in inexxpressible grandeur. Rather than a chain of moutntains, they appear as isolated peaks, each forming a mazed background without form or order. From each pocket between the peaks, there flows down into the main Bella Coola an ice-cold affluent. In the river valleys the predominant tree is the cedar (4), often rising to a great height.

(1). "The Mythology of the Bella Coola Indians"; Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. II, 1898, p. 26. Repeated reference will be made to this memoir, and when Boas is quoted without further description it will be to this article.
(2). Boas, p. 26.
(3). Clark Wissler, "The American Indian", second edition, New York 1922, p. 227.
(4). A glossary of the scientific names of the animals, birds, and plants mentioned in this monograph will be found on page .

In places cottonwoods flourish, while everywhere there is an undergrowth so dense as to be almost impenetrable. Particularly where the ground is damp, and the heavy valley soil holds water like a sponge, the Devil's Club grows luxuriously, it spiny branches taking full toll of anyone who passes carelessly. Wherever there is an opening in the forest the berry bushes shoot up with surprising speed. Thus the river valleys present a picture of luxuriant growth, rivalling that of the tropics. On the lower slopes of the mountains moss festooned pines and spruces are the most common trees, gradually becoming smaller and scantier until the barren peaks are reached, The mountains rise so precipitously that it seems as if their snow-caps and glaciers actually overhang the valley, a narrow ribbon of green winding beneath them.

The range of vision from the bank of the river is limited by the all-encircling mountains. Here and there a distant vista opens up to expose peak after peak, but on the whole there is a feeling of confinement, in contrast to the open wastees of the upper country where the Bella Coola rises. Mountains, forests, flowing water, these are the three dominant impressions of the Bella Coola country.

The fauna of central British Columbia, although comparatively rich, played no important part in the lives of the Bella Coola. The marten, the wolverine, the lynx, bears, both black and grizzly, were hunted for their skins which formerly were used for cloaks. Deer were so comparatively rare, and although hunted whenever possible, they formed a negligible item of diet. The skins of moose and caribou were traded from the Carriers and used for many purposes, but neither of these animals was found in Bella Coola. The animal of greatest economic importance was the mountain goat. These creatures were hunted with dogs and then choked to death by means of nooses so that no blood might injure their valuable wool. This was woven into blankets. Smoked goat meat was formerly found in every house and was the only flesh available during the winter.

Like the mammals, birds were not of prime importance to the Bella Coola. Those members of the tribes resident near the sea-coast used to kill large numbers of ducks and geese. The inhabitants of the inland villages sometimes made hunting expeditions to the nesting places of the wild-fowl in the lakes of the interior up-

lands. Sometimes vast numbers of birds were killed in this way, but wild-fowl could never have been described as a steady article of diet. The same is true for grouse. Always plentiful, these birds were commonly killed, but never in sufficient quantities to be important.

Although no form f agriculture was practised, the Bella Coola were kxrgely dependent on the vegetable kingdom for much of their sustenance. Allusion has already been made to the wealth of berries. Some of these were eaten raw, but many more were pounded into a pulpy pass and then dried in the sun. Cakes prepared in this way kept indefinitely and formed one of the regular winter foods. The bark of the hemlock and cottonwood was eaten as well as the roots of many plants. In recent years many of these articles of food have not been used, so that an investigator is apt to overlock kkxxgxxxk their great importance in the life of the Bella Coola. Although useless for food the cedar was, in some respects, the kxxxxxxx corner-stone of Bella Coola economic life. From its trunk wre split out with wedges the wide planks which formed their houses. Dishes, benches, cooking-boxes, cradles, totem-poles, xix canoes, all were carved from its wood. The bark was woven into baskets and when dyed formed the most common ceremonial decoration.

The basis of Bella Coola food supply was fish. The river teemed with salmon, and it was owing to the abundance of this nutricious article of food that the country was able to support its relatively large population. Spring, sockeye, hump-back, dog and cohoe salmon, all entered the river in swarms during the spring and summer, while the steel-head could be caught throughout the year. The fish were caught in salmon-weirs and their flesh smoked for x winter use. This formed, throughiut the year, the principal article of diet. Second only in importance to the salmon was the olachen, a fish somewhat x resembling a herring which entered the river in thousands in April or May. They were taken in purse-like nets and allowed to rot for ten days or two weeks. Then the fish were boiled and the grease skimmed off. This kept indefinitely and was used as a relish for other foods. It was always a sign of poverty if a person was forced to eat berries without theseasoning of olachen grease. Trout and bull-heads were found in the rivers but were not sufficiently plentiful to be of importance.

Even within the forty miles of river valley formerly occupied by the Bella Coola there are considerable variations in climate. At the mouth of the river this is the typical Pacific coast ~~xkimmkm~~ type, without great extremes of temperature and with much rain. In winter, especially, the rainfall is very heavy. A few hundred feet above the valley the moisture is precipiated as snow, and during the winter the ~~mkgmxmfxkkm~~ limit of snowfall can be watched from day to day as it rises or falls a few feet. Further up the valley the winters are colder and snow often lies for weeks on the ground, and by the time one reaches the upper limits of the old Bella Coola range, the winters are severe, although far less so than on the upper regions immediately to the east.

The Bella Coola firmly believe that long, long ago ~~Alquntam~~, the supreme god, caused their first ancestors to be created in his house, Nusmat a, in the land above and sent them down to populate the Bella Coola valley. These first people came in groups of two or three, brothers and sisters, or occasionally man and wive, each group descending, often in animal form, to a certain mountain and then making their home at its foot. They had brought with them animals and fish, tools and houses, and the knowledge of ceremonial dances, in fact, they only differed from the Bella Coola of the recent past in having greater supernatural power. These first people increased with extraordinary rapidity, until each group of first people ~~kmm~~ grew into a village, bound together by a knowledge of their first ancestor. In course of time the occupants of certain villages combined, some increased more rapidly than others, but on the whole its village maintained its character of being the descenadnts of one group of the first settlers of this world. (2)

This mythological belief is a fair ~~xmpxxxxxxdxtixmxxfx~~ picture of Bella Coola life as it was when the first white man visited it. MacKenzie, making his memorable overland trip to the Pacific, records how ~~thsxxxkixyy~~ he came upon Indian villages at every few miles of his course. Boas (1) describes how each of these villages claims to be descended from one group of ancestors.

The following list of Bella Coola towns was obtained. An effort was made to learn

(1). 48. (2). Cf. Boas, 48.

It is impossible to estimate the former population of the Bella Coola valley with any degree of accuracy, but it is safe to say that it must have been in the thousands. Now the tribe numbers less than three hundred individuals, living in one village on the Indian reserve on the north bank of the Bella Coola River about a quarter of a mile from the sea. Sixty years ago the tribe was stricken with small-pox, and since then consumption, venereal disease, measles, and other marks of the white man have taken their deadly toll. Changed conditions of life and the decay of the rich ceremonial around which their interest in the old days centred are also contributory factors in their decline, but it is satisfactory to know that within the last few years the population has at least held its own.

The following list of the Bella Coola towns was obtained. In an effort to learn which of these had been deserted in recent years the writer asked in each case, whether the town was occupied at the time of MacKenzie's visit, an event of such great interest to the grandparents of my elderly informants that memory of it is still preserved. Those villages said to have been occupied at that time are marked with an asterisk.

Three rivers flow into the head of South Bentinck Arm, which is about one mile in width. The Bella Coola enters the sea at the south edge of the head of the arm, and at the north the Nutx xtskwan e, winding in from the north. This stream, "The Nearest River" of the Bella Coola, so-called because it is nearest to the sea, is shown on the maps as the Necleetscoomay. Between these two, enters the Pe al , a small stream rising on the north side of the Bella Coola valley to the east of the Necleetscoomay. Just before merging their waters with North Bentinck Arm these three rivers flow more slowly and there are considerable tide-flats. Formerly there were several Bella Coola villages clustered around the mouths of these three rivers.

1. Qame x. On the west bank of the Necleetscoomay about three-quarters of a mile from the sea. Nothing is known of this long abandoned village except that there was once a conflagration here during which sparks from the burning village were blown far and wide over the whole Bella Coola valley. (Sic.)

2. T sall mx, "Short Feet." Situated on the very shore of North Bentinck Arm west and north of the mouth of the Neclectsconnay. The ~~mmm~~ fiord terminates in a tolerably square end, running north and south, and this town was at the northern edge of the end. It was built on piles and the inhabitants could only only stept to the ground at low tide. This is the explanation given of the peculiar name, which is a reference to the curtailed walking space. Long ago it was a large town but was probably only occupied during the winter. In summer the people are believed to have moved to Numam c, "The Place of Flies", on the north side of North Bentinck Arm, about one mile from its head.

* 3. Alqalaxl, "The Fenced Town", so called because it was stockaded. Near the south bank of the ~~m~~ Pe sl , about one quarter miles from the sea, near the site of the present mission church. It was inhabited until about fifty years ago. According to one informant this village was founded by a certain Taxlexw m, a descendant of Tiakwala, who decided to move closer to the river.

4. Tloqo tl, "Small Mound", so called from the knoll on which it was situated. Above Alqalaxl, and about one half-mile to the north of the present Bella Coola River. Its site is pierced by the present road connecting the Indian village of Bella Coola to the white settlement of the same name.

5. Anutsqwa xstl, "Labretted." ~~Axxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ The eastern continuation of the last-mentioned.(1). Th origin of the name is explained as follows:--

One of the first people, Tiakwala by name, travelled to the Skeena River after coming to this earth in the beginning of time, where he saw many women wearing labrets. On his return to Bella Coola he settled at Anutsqwa xstl and carved on his totem-pole the figure of a woman with an abelone-shell labret as

(1). It will be noted that several towns, ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ each consisting of a single row of houses, are regarded as forming two villages, with no visible mark to show the limits of each.

memorial of his voyage. Visitors coming to his potlatches named the town from this figure.

This town is said to have been one of the largest in the valley many years ago.

7* L. Aima ta. A small town to the north of the last, not far from the present. It is asserted that it was founded by a descendant of Tidwala named Aima ta. There is doubt as to how long ago this town was deserted. The consensus of opinion was that it had not been occupied for many years, but our informant recently dug up a clay pipe on the alleged site.

* 7. Stuie ta, "What has been Divided." On the north shore of the Bella Coola River about a quarter of a mile from the sea, the site of the present Hudson Bay Company's post. This was the village founded by Quit.

X* L. Camqo ta, meaning doubtful, perhaps "Unity". This, the most populous village of the valley in the recent past, is still inhabited by one or two families. The inhabitants of other villages explain its large population through marriages with slaves. This was the upper, eastern, continuation of the last, and the two in combination formed a row of houses stretching for three quarters of a mile.

9. Uscaxkp ux, "The Treeless Place." On the north side of the Bella Coola, supposedly about one half mile about Aima ta. This village was long ago deserted.

10. Te xte ext kp ta, "Where there is much te xte ext kp", some kind of hollow-stemmed plant. Some distance back from the north bank of the Bella Coola, near the lower slope of the mountain, and about three miles from the sea. It is probable that there was a town at this spot very long ago, according to the statement of one old man, and the numerous nuqnasintsta in the vicinity support this view.

* 11. S nxɬ, "Sunny". On south side of the Bella Coola opposite the last. Deserted about fifteen years ago. This was a fairly large town, though never as big as ~~Qomqoxa~~ Qomqo ts. The name is derived from Sun, s nx, and there are two explanations given for it. A One informant states that the name was derived from the many revelations of the Sun to the first people there, another informant states that the first chief, said to have been named Stalt mx, erected a large totem-pole, decorated with the figure of a sun. This blew down, in consequence of which the people called their town S nxɬ, "Fallen Sun."

* Tc mo tɬ, Z South side of Bella Coola River about three miles from the sea, at the end of the present bridge.

* 12. Sqom lɬ. South side of the Bella Coola about three miles from the sea, and a short distance below the end of the present bridge. Meaning of the name unknown.

* 13. Tc mo tɬ. Upper continuation of the latter, deserted at time of small-pox. The name of the chief who came there at the beginning of time was given as Tewakil k. The meaning of the name is, "Where the river is sufficiently deep to cover the stones, but shallow enough for rapids."

14. Sno oniqw lx, "On the Point". On a curving promontory on the south bank of the river about four miles from the sea. It was long ago swept away when the river changed its course.

15. Nu exmaq, "The place of foul Water." On north bank of Bella Coola a little above the last, at a place where there there were a number of stagnant pools between the river and the mountains, from which the town took its name. No one knows how long ago this town was abandoned, but as the names of people living there figure in stories which are said not to be of great antiquity, it was probably deserted not many years ago. Probably a large town since it was a good fishing place.

16. Ts lkt, "American Eagle." Also on the north shore of theriver, a little

above the last. Probably washed away by a flood long ago although traces of the salmon-weir were still visible not long ago.

17. Nuqaxmats, "The Place of much qaxmats." (1) A large town long ago deserted but the river has not washed away all traces of it. On the north side of the river about one mile above last.

18. Snut li, "The Place of Dog Salmon." On the south bank above the last at a place where a small stream entered the Bella Coola River dividing the town into two sections. It was long deserted and the river has carried away that portion of the village below the creek. The name is derived from an enormous dog salmon which has been seen at long intervals in a waterfall near this spot, always with a water ouzel perched on its back.

19. Oqmik mx. On the lower end of the island at Hagensbourg, eleven miles from the ocean. Although long deserted traces of this village can still be seen. Meaning of the name unknown.

* 20. Nukits, "The Place of the Whirlpool." A village of moderate size, recently abandoned. The first occupant was said to have been Ik mkila, which means, "The first of All." South side of the river eleven and a quarter miles from the sea.

* 21. Asan an i, "The Concave Town", so called because it spread around the shore of a bay scooped out by the Bella Coola. South side, slightly above the influx of the Nusatsm River, thirteen and one quarter miles from the sea. Deserted about sixty years ago.

* 22. Nusq lst. On the north side of the river, opposite the mountain of the same name. Deserted about sixty years ago.

* 23. Nutlo x, "The Place where there are no Falls." An affluent from the north enters the main Bella Coola about ¾ miles from the sea, and this town was lo-

(1). An unidentified species of plant.

cated on this creek about two hundred yards above its junction with the Bella Coola. The ruins of this moderately la ge town were still standing about fifty years ago. It was at this town that MacKenzie reached the Bella Coola River, and it was happened that at the time of his arrival the town was larger than usual since the salmon-weir there had withstood some heavy freshets which destroyed most of the weirs on the Bella Coola and drove the inhabitants of other villages to Nutlo x.

It is said that the affluent at Nutlo x, the stream Xaiqts, is the only one in the whole Bella Coola valley that does not ~~xxxx~~ falls precipitously into a vale leading into the Bella Coola valley. Its source is in a spring at the end
~~xxxx~~ of a pocket-like valley, at the base of steep cliffs, but it does not fall down these. The town is named from this circumstance. The area around the spring is called Nuxnax nxit, and it is said that some families living on the Skeena sing of this place as the spot where their first ancestors came to earth, although their descendants are ignorant where this is located.

* 24. Stu x. On the point x between the La x lx (Atnarko) and Sla tl (Whitewater) Rivers which join to form the Bella Coola. This, the most populous of the upper river towns, was deserted not long ago. The meaning of the name is unknown.

25. Qwliutl, "The Place of Norbage." On north side of Atnarko, a few hundred yards above the forks. This small town was deserted many years ago. The name was given owing to the hill behind the village which was covered with a rank growth of plants and small bushes, but no trees.

26. Snutl tl, "The Place of Falls", so called from the strong rapids of the Atnarko at this point. It was located on the north side of this river about ten miles from the forks. This large town was long ago deserted at the time that a rock in the midst of the stream, on which the salmon-weir rested, broke.

The two following villages may be included with the above.

27. Asl tā. On the west bank of the Neclectsconnay, about three quarters of a mile from the sea. This village was long ago deserted, indeed there is doubt concerning its very name. No meaning known.

28. Nusxeq. On the shore of North Bentinck Arm, to the east of the creek that flows into it at Green Bay. This long deserted village was built so close to the ocean that at a high tide reached almost to the houses. According to one informant the name was derived from that of the first chief sent down from above to that spot, while another man derived it, etymologically, from Nusx, the name of the distant barren district some four and one half miles up the valley of the creek. (1). In recent years this village site was only used as a summer camp.

The name given to the Bella Coola valley is Nuxalk, that given to the inhabitants of the valley, excluding those of villages numbered 27 and 28, is Nuxalk nx. (2).

Two questions must be considered with regard to the above list of towns:

Firstly, can it be regarded as an accurate list, or do the towns belong to the realm of traditional mythology?

Secondly, are the customs and beliefs of the inhabitants of the different towns sufficiently similar that they can be described without reference to the differences local?

The first question is difficult to answer. There is no question that the Bella Coola consider these towns to be historical facts, but so do the peopling of the earth by men created in the land above. The writer believes the above list to be substantially correct. The Bella Coola, now collected into a single village, still remember their ancient homes. One informant,

(1). See page . (2). Boas, page 49, states that Nuxalk is only applied to the power villages of the valley. All the writer's information was contrary to this view.

for example, stated as a matter of course he he was a man of Snut li. Further inquiry elicited the information that he was born at S nx̣a, where his father had moved at the time of the small-pox epidemic. It later appeared that my informant's father was born at Tc mo th and had married there, and that it was this man's father who had moved from Snut li. My informant's grandchildren regard themselves as Snut li boys, their names are embodied in myths of that village, although their forbears have not lived in that village for five generations. There is nox reason to suppose this instance exceptional. Other caseswere obtained of the movements of people from one village to another at earlier times, and the writer sees no reason to doubt the general accuracy of these. Th continued use of names embodied in the origin myths of the different towns has been a potent factor in keeping alive remembrance of these towns. Uncertainties and inaccuracies there must be in the above, but on the whole it appears to be fairly accurate.

The writer obtained accounts of the same ceremonies from the descendants of people of different towns, and found in most cases that they were identical. There were a few differences in custom from the people of Stu x and the other upper valley towns, which will be mentioned when necessary, but on the whole the inhabitants of the Bella Coola valley can be considered as a tribal unity.

Boas (1) gives a list of Bella Coola towns which agrees fairly well with the above. Among his villages he gives Pe sl , (No. 4), Nutx xtakwan e (No. 7), and Nuants n (No. 16) (2). The writer is convinced that these are the names of streams, although there is no reason for supposing that villages located on these streams might not have been known at times by the names of the streams themselves. The writer did not hear of five villages recorded by Boas, Nos. 6, 8, 9, and 19 and 24.

The villages of the Bella Coola valley did not form a political unit, each was independent. A common language was spoken throughout and the inhabitants of the different villages recognised that their

(1). Page 46. (2). Using in each case the spelling of this monograph.

origins and customs were similar. This was also recognized to be the case with regard to the people living on South Bentinck Arm and at the head of Dean Channel. The writer interviewd Indians from both of these areas and is convinced that, except for minor details in certain beliefs, their customs were identical with those of the Bella Coola valley people. Accordingly, in this monograph, the term"Bella Coola" will be taken to mean the inhabitants of not only that valley, but of South Bentinck Arm and the head of Dean Channel as well. It will be convenient to refer to the people of ~~the~~ South Bentinck Arm as Tal io people, ~~a~~ Bella Coola designation for them, and to those of Dean Channel as Kimsquit people, the name by which they are generally known. It is an anglicised form of the ~~Bella Bella~~ word K nxdw t, by which the Bella Bella designate the people of Salmon River.

VILLAGES ON SOUTH BENTINCK ARM.

29. Sutàia. On east side of South Bentinck Arm, about one quarte of a mile from the point that marks its junction with North Bentinck Arm. Food was obtained from an ocean ~~fish-trap~~ fish-trap. Long deserted except as a summer camp.

30. Q nk lst, "Island." East side of South Bentinck Arm, slightly north of the island that is opposite the Hot Springs on the west side of the fiord. The town took its name from the island. In summer numerous inhabitants used to live immediately opposite the island, at a place where the had an ocean salmon-trap, and in winter moved to a fortified spot at the base of a mountain slightly further to the north. This village was blotted out by a landslide one spring long ago, the few survivors being unable to re-establish it.

* (1). 31. Tsno-ithem. On the east side of the fiord about four miles above the last. A small town, in which the inhabitants were supported on the spoil from their ocean fish-trap, not long deserted.

(1). MacKenzie did not visit either South Bentinck Arm or Kimsquit, but it will be convenient to continue the use of asterisks to mark those towns which are said to have been inhabited at that time.

32. Kx is, "Ocean fish-trap." On the east side of South Bentinck Arm, about a quarter of a mile from the Nu k^{w} River. It is doubtful whether this was a town or merely a camping place used by the people of Nu k^{w} when using their salmon-trap. These ocean fish-traps work on the following method. A pen is made by a series of stakes, into which the salmon enter at high tide. It is then closed and as the falling tide lays bare the mud the imprisoned fish can be scooped out by hand or in hand-nets.

* 33. Nu k^{w}. A large town on a raised mound on the south side of the mouth of the Nu k^{w} River which enters the head of South Bentinck Arm from the east. The meaning w is unknown. This was a populous town until decimated by the epidemic of small-pox.

* 34. Tal ic. On the west side of the mouth of the river of the same name which flows into South Bentinck Arm from the south. The location of this village was constantly changed, owing to variations inthe course of the river hich swept away the site. It was formerly a large town, and has only been deserted within the last twenty years. This village had another name, Tqw ntkes, "Facing", so called because its houses faced those of the town of Nu k^{w}.

As x^{w}, "At the head".

* 35. Qwapx. At the head of South Bentinck Arm there is a bay running south-west, and at the head of this bay there enters a small creek up the valley of which is a trail leading to a lake at the head of Rivers Inlet. As x^{w} was located on this creek, at some little distance from the ocean. The meaning is derived from the geographical location of the town. It has not long been deserted and must have been a populous town to judge from the numerous qualmsiutsta.

36. Qwapx. On the east side of the mouth of a creek flowing into the bay at the head of South Bentinck Arm from the south. This town was of moderate size. The meaning is unknown and is thought to be in the Rivers Inlet language.

TOWNS AT KIMSQUIT.

Two rivers, the Salmon from the east, and the Kimsquit from the north, flow into the head of Dean Channel, and the Indian villages in of this area can be grouped according to the two rivers.

Towns near the Salmon River.

* 37. Anuth ix. The present site of the Kimsquit Indian village near the mouth of the Salmon River. The meaning of the name could not be learnt.

* 38. Nut l, "Canyon". On the north shore of the Salmon River at the bottom of the canyon. This large town was only recently deserted.

39. Ax t i, "Occupied Mound". On south side of the Salmon River about one mile from the sea. This small town was deserted many years ago. The name is derived from the small mound on which it was built.

* 40. Nutsqwalt, "Many spawning sockeye salmon." On south side of the Salmon River, about one and one quarter miles from the sea. A lar e town recently deserted.

* 41. Nusqapts, "Place of many spring salmon." On south bank about twenty-five miles from the sea. This spot was not settled when people first occupied this world, but was later taken possession of by Alquntam.

42. Ixw nk. East side of river twenty-eight miles from the sea. There is doubt about this town which is said to have been a colony of the Kimsquit Riv r settlement, a fact which is difficult to believe.

43. Sawal os, "Where Canoes are Left." On north side of the river about thirty-five miles from the sea. Immediately opposite was Sutk ita, "Winter Trail." These two are considered as forming one town, but were probably never more than camping grounds at the spot where the winter trail to the interior left the river. It is possible that they formed a town, since the names of the alleged first settlers in the beginning of time were learnt.

* 44. Askita. At Salmon House on the upper Salmon River. The writer is much puz-

zled about these towns on the upper Salmon. Their mythological history has been obtained and from the statements of some informants one would judge that they were occupied until recently. On the other hand one hears of Carrier settlements at this place. The probable explanation is that the Bella Coola formerly extended over this area, either in actual fact or in mythology, but the Carriers have lived there recently.

The Salmon River is called Nut l and the generic name for the people of the towns on it is Sutsl mx. At the time of the small-pox epidemic, about sixty years ago, the people from the Kimsquit River moved down to the Salmon. After At that time a certain Kimsquit River man is believed to have said,

"We will supplant them until we can kill eventheir dogs."

Whatever may be the reason, since that time practically every Slamon River Indian has died, and the only survivors on that river are the descendants of those who moved from the Kimsquit. Within the last few years the few survivors of these have wished to move to Bella Coola, and the Bella Coola, remembering the fate of the Salmon River people,have been unwilling.

Towns on the Kimsquit River, Sa tsk .

* 45. Sa tsk . This large and important town was at the mouth of the river of the same name. It was deserted at the time of the small-pox.

* 46. Nuxw lst. This can be conveniently considered with the last, although situated on the shore of Dean Channel at the site of the present Manitou Cannery. No meaning of the name is known.

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.

The subject of this monograph is the people of the above forty-six villages. They will be referred to as a "tribe", Since this term is usually limited to a political unit, it will be necessary to explain, briefly, the use of this term.

There was no political cohesion between the villages of the Bella Coola valley, and still less, if possible, between the three groups above described.

and
There was no supreme chief, no governmental meeting of the rtibe as a whole. Not only were the three groups not bound to support one another in war, but they were themselves often at war. Indeed bloddshed between the towns of the Bella Coola valley itself was not uncommon. Further, the different groups tended to merge with their near neighbours. Thus the Tal io people frequently married with the Rivers Inlet Indians and the Bella Bella, the Kimsquit with the stamx and the Kitlobe, and the Bella Coola of the upper valley with the Carriers.

In spite of thse grave difficulties in considering the three groups as a tribe, the writer believes the use if the word justifiable for the following reasons.

A. LINGUISTIC. All spoke the same language. There were dialectical differences between the people of Bella Coola, Tal io, and Kimsquit, but the same each group could understand the others. This differentiated them clearly from all neighbouring tribes.

B. CEREMONIAL. A member of a secret society in any one of the above towns was accepted as a member of the same society at any other town. The member of another tribe, even if known to be a member of a secret society, was treated as an uninitiated.

C. BY ORIGIN. The people of Bella Coola, Tal io, and Kimsquit felt themselves to be akin through the knowledge that they had been created together in the house of the supreme deity above. Thus there was a strong sentimental bond of union.

NEIGHBOURING TRIBES.

It will be convenient to describe, briefly, at this point the tribes with whom the Bella Coola were in contact.

CARRIERS. To the east of Bella Coola, amid the uplands, roved the Carriers. They used frequently to come down to the Bella Coola country in summer to trade for salmon and there was considerable intermarriage between the two tribes, especially in the upper villages of the Bella Coola valley. None the less the

Bella Coola considered these people to be utterly foreign in habits and beliefs. To call a man a "Carrier" is, and was, a deadly insult. The Carriers lacked the rich ceremonial life of the coastal peoples, and for this reason the Bella Coola considered them beneath contempt. During the winters when game was scarse, many Carriers were forwed to live with the Bella Coola, and even, it is said, with the Bella Bella and people of Rivers Inlet. Though never regarded as particularly welcome guests, the Carriers served a great purpose, they were the uninitiated parexcellence among the Bella Coola. The winter ceremonial of thsee people consists largely of dramatic~~ix~~ representation by means of masked figures of supernatural beings. At times almost all the adult members of the Bella Coola community were initiated members of one or othwr society, and it was difficult to maintain the air of mystery. But the presence of even a few Carriers made a great difference, the contempt in which they were held by their hosts made ~~him~~ it all the more necessary that they be suitably impressed. In such cases they occupied the houses of those with whom they had established

BELLA BELLA. To the west of the Bella Coola live the Bella Bella, called lqw las mx. Although linguistic differences prevented free communication between the two tribes, and wars were fairly common, yet the Bella Coola realised the similarity of culture, and a Bella Bella was not considered inferior in the way that a Carrier was. In fact, the Bella ~~B~~ Coola regard the Bella Bella with considerable respect as the people who really understand the s saok ceremonial, one of the branches of the Bella Coola winter ceremonial. Intermarriages were not uncommon, and the Bella Coola realize that many of their rites have come from Bella Bella.

The Bella Coola say that the chief Bella Bella ~~T~~ towns were:

Qwa~~l~~na, on "Kwatna" Bay.

Na mu, the present"Namu" of the maps.

Qwiai, four miles from the last.

Nut m.

Q a~~l~~na was the nearest Bella Bella settlement to Bella Coola and many of the inhabitants spoke ~~and~~ Bella Coola. There was much intermarriage with Qwa~~l~~na

people, in fact Boas (1) gives it as a Bella Coola village. There were seven distinct villages on Kwatna Inlet and the Kwatna River which flows in from the south-east.

1. Sinuʌk mitɬ, "Where it spoke". A small oupost on the east shore of Kwatna Inlet near the entrance, used only to give warning of approaching raiders. The explanation of the name is as follows:—

Once long ago, a party of Qwaʌna people was encamped at this spot in expectation of a hostile war-party. This did not appear, and one of the watchers, weary and angry, said to the pudenda of one of their female companions.

"Tell us what is going to happen."

To the amazement of all a voice came from the organs, saying,

"You will all be killed."

So it transpired. A war party caught the watchers and only one escaped to tell the tale. Since then that place has been known as "Wher it Spoke". It was long ago deserted.

* 2. Ax t i, "Occupied Mound". On the island in Kwatna Inlet. The ruins of this village were still standing in the time of the father of an elderly ~~fax~~ informant. This village was peculiar in that the chiefs were bureied in a separate cemetery from the common people.

3. Nuʌiliqoɬank, "Place of Many Boulders." A large pile-built village on the shore of Kwatna Inlet to the north and east of the mouth of ther iver. At high tide the ocean penetrated under the piles. Its name was derived from the many boulders beneath the houses. It is said that there was once friction between the people living at either end of the town and that a dug ditch was dug to separate the two sections. It was long ago deserted.

4. Anutc x, "House of Tiers". On the east and north side of the Kwatna River about half a mile from its mouth. In the centre of the village there was a large semi-subterranean house with many platforms, from which the village took its name. It was long ago deserted.

5. Aumkas lst, "The Place of Big Stones in The River". On the same side of the river, about three miles above the last. It was a large town in the distant past. The situation was at a place where the river was very dangerous with large boulders projecting above the surface of the water.

* 6. Wakw s. About one mile above the last, on the same side of the rivver, immediately above a small creek. This town was deserted at the time of the small-pox epidemic. The meaning is unknown and it is thought the name Wakw s is in the Bella Bella language.

* 7. Name unknown. The largest town at Qwakna was about one half mile above the last, where the river forks. It was practically wiped out at the time of the small-pox epidemic.

At each of these river villages there was a salmon-weir from which the people gained their chief subsistence.

STAMX. Until about 1863, the time of the small-pox epidemic, there were towns on the fiords and villages of Dean Channel between Kimsquit and Bella Bella. The inhabitants were called stamx by the Bella Coola and staitx by the Bella Bella. Their settlements were at Elcho Harbour, Green River, Cascade Inlet, and at several unidentified places. Their language is said to have differed slightly from that of the Bella Bella, but the people themselves married freely with both the Kimsquit and Bella Bella, thus forming a connecting link between these two tribes.

The writer obtained a list of stamx towns from one old man, who claimed to be a descendant of the people. It was impossible to verify his list from other informants, and since he himself was not an ideal communicant, the following can only be regarded as approximately correct.

1. Akko. At Elcho Harbour.

2. K l ot. On a fiord three miles above, that is, approximately east, the last.

3. Att k or Yuqwa t, on a river three miles above the last.

4. Numaisa x, on a river two miles above last.

5. Nusq tk, on a fiord three miles above the last.

6. Omtlom, on a fiord three miles above thelast.

7. Sunw lk, on a river two miles above the last and thirty miles below Kimsquit.

According to the old men from whom the above list of towns was obtained, Nuxw lst, at Kimsquit, (listed as village No. 46 above) was also populated by stamx people.

~~XXXXX~~ ———————

In addition to the Bella Bella, stamx, and Carriers, the Tal io people were usually on amicable terms with the people of Rivers Inlet, and the Kimsquit with the Kitlobe people. The Bella Coola were also accustomed to as guests to potlatches given by the people of Alert Bay, Knight's Inlet and Bute Inlet, and to receive them as guests at Bella Coola. There seems to have been little friendly intercourse with the northern tribes. The Bella Coola frequently suffered from the raids of the ~~Kitkatlx~~ Kitkatla, and the writer heard many accounts of the fear inspired by their famous chief, Te h sa.

~~Contemporaries~~ It may be said that the Bella Coola were in close contact with the neighbouring coastal tribes, with the members of which they felt themselves to have cultural affinities. From these tribes the Bella Coola recognize that they have received many ceremonial rites, and must have received others which they now consider indigenous. It is probable that certain Bella Coola elements of culture must likewise have ~~xxxx~~ been transmitted to their neighbours, but such lie without the scope of this monograph. The outlying Bella Coola villages were in close contact with their foreign neighbours, and tended to adopt their culture, but, on the whole the Bella Coola present a tribal entity, with customas and beliefs not found elsewhere in British Columbia.